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ABSTRACT

Invitational education is a general framework for thinking and acting about what is believed to be worthwhile in schools. It centers on five basic principles: (1) people are able, valuable, and responsible, and should be treated accordingly; (2) educating should be a collaborative, cooperative activity; (3) the process is the product in the making; (4) people possess untapped potential in all areas of worthwhile human endeavor; and (5) this potential can best be realized by places, policies, programs, and processes specifically designed to invite development, and by people who are intentionally inviting with themselves and others personally and professionally. The publication consists of eight chapters. Chapter 1 introduces invitational education and explains how it serves as a vehicle for understanding the influence of people, places, policies, programs, and procedures on students. Chapter 2 explores the three foundations of individual education: the perceptual tradition, self-concept theory, and democratic practice. Chapter 3 examines the stance necessary to maintain an inviting perspective and sets the stage for development of skills and the handling of challenging situations. Chapter 4 discusses the craft of inviting as a complex process requiring commitment, sensitivity, courage, and imagination, while chapter 5 looks at how invitational education addresses difficult situations. Chapter 6 focuses on ways to develop skill in applying invitational education, highlighting the importance of the person in the process. Chapter 7 presents two models for next century schools; Chapter 8 looks at how a school can systematically embody this approach. Appendix A provides practical suggestions for the whole school in implementing the inviting approach; Appendix B lists inviting and disinviting verbal and physical signals. (Contains 302 references.) (ND)